



NEWSLETTER

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Number 78

Chapel Hill

September 1983

From the Editor

A long delayed and much anticipated meeting of the Archaeological Society of North Carolina was held on Saturday, April 23, 1983 at Western Piedmont Community College in Morganton. For the sixty-six members and friends of the Society, it was a grand reunion; seeing old friends, meeting new ones, and comparing notes on what has happened archaeologically. Coffee and doughnuts were provided by our hosts, the Unifour Archaeological Society.

Larry Clark, Director of Planning and Research for the college welcomed our group. Charles Carey, interim President of the Society, expressed hope for a more active society and member participation. Mr. Carey introduced the first speaker, Dr. Roy Dickens, Director of The Research Laboratories of Anthropology (RLA) at UNC, Chapel Hill. Dr. Dickens noted that the ASNC was founded October 7, 1933 and that this would be our fiftieth year as a society. He explained the early relationship between the RLA and the Society and their parallel roles over the years. Dr. Dickens described the accelerated loss of sites and artifacts over the past fifty years through the modernizing of farming, building, and collecting. Professionally, the archaeological emphasis is now on preservation rather than collecting and excavation. Sites are now seen as a finite entity and decisions are weighed heavily before any excavation is undertaken. Dr. Dickens urged continued cooperation between the RLA and the Society.

Dr. Charles Faulkner, of the University of Tennessee, gave a fascinating slide program on the unique find in east Tennessee at Mud Glyph Cave. The site was found in 1979 by amateur cave explorers who reported the site. Formal exploration and documentation of the cave was done in 1982 on a grant from National Geographic Society. The 520-meter long cave had a variety of abstract, zoomorphic, and anthropomorphic figures drawn in the soft mud of the cave walls. Eight organic samples from the cave were dated, with six clustering between the 6th and 12th centuries A.D. Dr. Faulkner postulated that the site was a ceremonial or ritual cave.

Mr. Stanley South, University of S. C. Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, gave a most interesting presentation on the discovery and history of the old Spanish site of Santa Elena, one of the earliest Spanish towns in North America. The first town had 40 to 60 houses and a church. Mr. South gave a most interesting and vivid history of the various vendettas and frictions between the French, Spanish, and Indians and the often fatal terminations of these disputes.

Dr. Thomas Burke, Chief Archaeologist for the N. C. Dept. of Archives and History, reported on the growth of the Archaeology Branch over the past ten years and outlined the activity their program and proposed future directions.

Mark Butler, a student at Western Piedmont Community College demonstrated the construction and throwing technique utilized by Early Man in hunting with the atlatl or spear thrower, a device still used by the Australian Bushmen.

Mr. Carey adjourned the meeting and thanked all those for attending. He reminded us that we need to prepare a slate of officers and plan a meeting befitting our fiftieth year and anniversary this Fall. The meeting site is tentatively planned to be at CHAPEL HILL.

Phil Perkinson

From the Research Laboratories of Anthropology

Summer Field Work:

The RLA, in cooperation with the Department of Anthropology, UNC, held an archaeology fieldschool this summer at three sites in Orange and Chatham counties, North Carolina. On the Eno River, site Or11, originally investigated by Dr. Joffre Coe in 1938 and 1940-41, was re-examined and additional information obtained. This site appears to be late prehistoric or proto-historic in age and to represent the remains of a village of relatively short duration. Comprehensive faunal and ethnobotanical samples were obtained from the village midden, and charcoal samples were acquired for radiocarbon dating. A new site (Or231), discovered a short distance from Or11, contains remains of an Indian occupation in the late 1600s and possibly the early 1700s. The age and location of this site make it a likely candidate for John Lawson's Occaneechi Town of 1701. At a third site (Ch452), this one located on the Haw River in Chatham County, the complete postmold pattern for an oval house was uncovered. This site also appears to date to the seventeenth century. The work at these three sites is part of a proposed several-year project to investigate culture change among the Carolina Piedmont Indians from late prehistoric times through the Historic period.

Site Records:

In January of 1983, the RLA and the Archaeology Branch of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources entered into an agreement through which the Branch would assume responsibility for maintaining the archaeological site files for the state and for assigning permanent site numbers. Although the RLA fulfilled these responsibilities for many years, today's requirements for management of cultural resources and a need to computerize massive quantities of data have necessitated that the Branch handle these tasks. The RLA will continue to maintain its own site files, which will be a duplicate of those at the Branch. Persons who have reported sites to the RLA in the past are now urged to report this information directly to the Branch, or, if they desire, to continue reporting to the RLA. Information sent to the RLA will be entered into its files and copies sent to the Branch.

From the Archaeology Branch, Raleigh

An important new publication on North Carolina prehistory is now available. Its title is The Prehistory of North Carolina: An Archaeological Symposium, edited by Mark Mathis and Jeffrey J. Crow. Sections on the Mountains by Burton Purrington, the Piedmont by Trawick Ward, and the Coastal Plain by David Phelps summarize and synthesize archaeological information for the state. In addition, each chapter suggests avenues for future research. There is a final overview chapter by Joffre Coe. Copies of the book can be purchased for \$6.00, plus \$1.00 for postage and handling, from the Archaeology Branch, Department of Cultural Resources, 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh, N. C. 27611. Discount prices for multiple orders are available.

Enclosed is a copy of a brochure, published jointly by the Branch and the North Carolina Commission on Indian Affairs, which describes important recent legislation designed to protect archaeological resources in our state. Of special importance is the new law regarding unmarked burials. Members are urged to familiarize themselves with these laws and to assist the Branch and the Commission by reporting cases of burial discovery and other situations in which these laws might apply. Additional copies of this brochure may be obtained from Delores Hall at the Branch in Raleigh.

NOTICE

A fall meeting of the Archaeological Society of North Carolina is being planned for Saturday, October 22, at Chapel Hill. Details and a program will be mailed to members within the next few weeks.

Tucker Reed Littleton
(1936-1983)

The Archaeological Society of North Carolina suffered the loss of a loyal member on August 15th when Tucker Reed Littleton died in New Bern. After suffering a stroke in his Swansboro home on August 6th, Tucker remained hospitalized at the Craven County Hospital where he never regained consciousness.

A 1957 graduate from Wake Forest University (Magna cum Laude), Tucker served as President of the Archaeological Society of North Carolina in 1978. He was, perhaps, the most prolific recorder of coastal archaeological sites the state has seen. Materials recovered in his survey work are curated at the Research Laboratories of Anthropology in Chapel Hill, where they constitute one of the larger private collections. Tucker's efforts and expertise in regards to coastal archaeology of the southeastern portion of the state contributed to the quality of numerous archaeological reports.

Although he was an ordained Baptist minister and a published poet, Tucker R. Littleton will probably be best remembered as an authority on the history of Swansboro, Onslow County, and Eastern North Carolina. In 1963, Tucker received the Charles A. Cannon Award from the Historical Preservation Society of North Carolina. He was also the recipient of an award of merit in the Willie Parker Peace Award competition, as well as the Jefferson Davis Award and the Smithwick Cup Award from the North Carolina Society of County and Local Historians. He was a past vice-president, as well as current president-elect of that society. Tucker was rising Chairman of the North Carolina Historical Society for 1984, as well as a member of many other historical societies and committees.

At the time of his death, Tucker was a member of the Swansboro Board of Commissioners. Much of his time over the past several years was devoted to preparations for that town's bicentennial celebration.

Unfortunately, Tucker had no health or life insurance and his family was left with substantial medical and funeral bills. Those who wish to do so may send donations to the:

Tucker Reed Littleton Fund
First Citizens Bank and Trust Company
Swansboro, N. C. 28584

The forthcoming issue of Southern Indian Studies will be dedicated to Tucker's memory.